

JULY 4TH – DESIGNATED DRIVER
FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS



Plan Before You Party This Fourth of July
Don't Forget to Designate a Sober Driver

- The Fourth of July holiday and weekend has become one of the deadliest times of the year due to impaired-driving-related traffic crashes and fatalities. In fact, 47 percent of the 514 traffic fatalities across the country on and around the Fourth of July in 2003 involved an impaired driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level of 0.08 grams per deciliter or higher, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
- According to a study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety of all motor vehicle fatalities in the United States between 1986 and 2002, July 3rd and July 4th are the two deadliest days of the year on our highways – with approximately 41 percent of the traffic fatalities involving an impaired driver with a BAC level of 0.08 or higher.
- As one point of comparison, four people died in America from injuries involving the use of fireworks around July 4th in 2003 according to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, while alcohol-related traffic crashes on July 4th killed 282 people. Fireworks and impaired driving are both dangerous, but impaired driving is considerably more deadly.
- Much of the tragedy that comes from impaired-driving-related crashes could be prevented if everyone would take a few simple precautions before going out to party this Fourth of July. When you plan on using alcohol, be sure to *Plan Before You Party – Designate a Sober Driver* in advance. And remember, *Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk*.
- Always follow these tips for a safer summer outing:
 - Designate your sober driver before going out.
 - If you're drinking alcohol, don't even think about driving when impaired – and never let your friends drive if you think they are impaired.
 - Don't drink alcohol "on an empty stomach," and drink lots of water during your activities to keep hydrated.

- When impaired, ask a sober friend for a ride home, use mass transit, or call a cab or your local sober rides program, **(if your community has a local sober rides program, insert the information and phone number here)**.
- Or ask a friend or family member to come get you; or just stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- And, of course, always remember to wear your safety belt. It is still your single best defense against injury or death in a crash.

Impaired Driving is a Deadly Problem

- Impaired driving is one of America's deadliest problems. Nationally in 2003, more than 14,000 people died in impaired-driving-related highway crashes involving a driver with a BAC level of 0.08 or higher. Hundreds of thousands more were injured.
- Every 30 minutes, nearly 50 times a day, someone in America dies in an alcohol-related crash. This means you, your friends, and your family are regularly at risk.
- According to NHTSA, about three in every ten Americans will be involved in an impaired-driving crash at some point in their lives.
- The rate of alcohol involvement in a fatal crash is more than three times as high at night than during the day.
- Although national alcohol-related highway fatalities during 2003 declined slightly for the first time in several years (down three percent from 2002), there is still much more work to be done.
- Too many people still don't understand that alcohol, drugs, and driving don't mix. Impaired driving is no accident – nor is it a victimless crime.
- Legislators and law enforcement officials are becoming even more vigilant in combating impaired driving. 2004 marked the first year that 0.08 percent BAC laws have been enacted in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Impaired Driving Creates Serious Consequences

- The tragedies and costs from drinking and driving impaired do not just end at the potential death, disfigurement, disability, and injury caused by impaired drivers.
- Driving impaired or riding with someone who is impaired is not worth the risk. The consequences are serious and real. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for driving while impaired can be really significant and not the way you want to spend your summer.

- Violators often face jail time, the loss of their driver's license, higher insurance rates, and dozens of other unanticipated expenses from attorney fees, fines and court costs, car towing and repairs, lost time at work, etc.
- There is the added embarrassment, humiliation, and potential loss and consequence after informing family, friends, and employers.
- The bottom-line: *Plan Before You Party Fourth of July. Don't Forget to Designate a Sober Driver.*

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